

CIA 8

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Let's Lift The Cloak

Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy, D-Minn., has come forth with another proposal to lift the cloak a bit on the United States' famed and defamed cloak-and-dagger organization, the Central Intelligence Agency, known throughout the world as CIA.

THE SENATOR has announced that he will ask the next session of Congress to approve a thorough investigation of the CIA by a select committee of the Senate.

The idea of a joint watchdog committee has been pushed since 1953 by Majority Leader Mike Mansfield. It has not been brought to a vote since 1956, when it lost by a 2-to-1 margin in the Senate. Ironically, the proposal was favored by Sen. John F. Kennedy, who later bore the brunt of the CIA's biggest mistake at the Bay of Pigs. Conceivably, some kind of joint congressional supervision could result from the inquiry McCarthy now proposes.

SEN. MCCARTHY'S idea is not only reasonable, but — in a democracy — essential and long overdue.

As McCarthy pointed out, every

other agency of the government is subjected to the most intensive scrutiny of congressional committees before its appropriation requests are acted on. Certainly the Congress has the responsibility to inquire into the ways CIA is spending its multi-million-dollar annual appropriations. And surely the Senate has the duty to study the manner in which the CIA influences the nation's foreign policy.

WE WOULD HOPE that a committee, such as the senator proposes, would find it feasible to release to the public some of its general findings. Within reasonable limits, such disclosures would not only be in the public interest, but could possibly brighten the questionable reputation the CIA has earned both at home and abroad. For under the absolute secrecy the CIA has always insisted upon, only its blunders come to light. It might be a healthy thing all around if we could learn something of its constructive efforts.

And surely the cloak could be lifted just a little without blunting the dagger.